

REMARKS

The Office Action dated March 2, 2004 has been received and carefully considered. In this response, claims 2, 3, 8, 9, 17-21 and 27 have been amended, claim 7 has been canceled and claims 28-30 have been added. Support for the amendments to the claims and the addition of the new claims may be found, *inter alia*, at page 15, lines 12-22 of the specification as originally filed. No new matter is introduced by the amendments or the new claims. Reconsideration of the outstanding rejections in the present application therefore is respectfully requested based on the following remarks.

Indefinite Rejection of Claims 2, 3, 7-12, 17-19 and 27

At page 2 of the Office Action, claims 2, 3, 7-12, 17-19 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being unclear. Claim 7 has been canceled and claim 17 has been amended in view of the Examiner's remarks. Withdrawal of this rejection therefore is respectfully requested.

Obviousness Rejection of Claims 2, 3, 7-12 and 17-27

At page 3 of the Office Action, claims 2, 3, 7-10 and 17-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haartsen (U.S. Patent No. 6,393,007). At page 5 of the Office Action, claims 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haartsen in view of Fazel (U.S. Patent No. 6,275,506). The claims have been amended, thereby obviating these rejections.

Claim 7 has been canceled without prejudice and claims 17, 20 and 21, from which claims 18, 19 and 22-26 respectively depend, have been amended to recite, in part, the limitations of wherein at least one time slot of a plural time slots shares at least one of a set of sync bits, a set of signaling bits, a set of CRC bits or a set of FECC bits with at least one adjacent time slot of the plural time slots, or similar limitations. New claim 28, from which claims 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 27, 29 and 30 presently depend, also recites similar limitations. The Applicants respectfully submit that the Office Action fails to establish that either Haartsen or Fazel, alone or in combination, discloses at least these limitations. Accordingly, the Office Action fails to establish that the proposed combination of Haartsen or Fazel discloses each and every limitations

of claims 17, 20, 21 and 28 or of claims 2, 3, 8-12, 18, 19, 22-27, 29 or 30 at least by virtue of their dependency from one of claims 17, 20, 21 or 28. Moreover, these dependent claims recite additional limitations neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the obviousness rejections are improper at this time and withdrawal of these rejections therefore is respectfully requested.

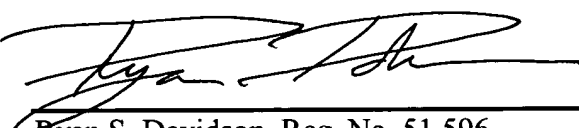
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early indication of the same is courteously solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone at the below listed telephone number in order to expedite resolution of any issues and to expedite passage of the present application to issue, if any comments, questions, or suggestions arise in connection with the present application.

The Applicants do not believe that any additional fees are due, but if the Commissioner believes additional fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 01-0365.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date


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